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THE SCHOOL FRIEND.

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For the School Friend.

ON TEACHING ARITHMETIC.—NO. 6.

BY JOSEPH RAY, M. D.

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After the pupils have become familiar with writing and reading the numbers in the first period, it is the practice of some excellent teachers to exercise them next in writing and reading numbers in the second period, the first being filled with cyphers. This will be found easier for the pupils to do than where the first period is filled with significant figures. Thus a learner will more easily write and read the number 125000 than 125405. Such numbers as the following are suitable for this exercise: 37000, 25000, 40000, 136000, 203000, 230000, 300000, and so on. After the class is rendered familiar with these operations, they may be exercised in a similar manner on the third period, the orders in the first and second periods being filled with cyphers. The next examples should consist of numbers in which every order is filled by a significant figure, such as 235786, or 385432791; examples of this kind being more easily managed by the pupils than those in which some of the places are filled by zeros. The last class of examples should consist of those in which some of the places are occupied by cyphers. Where there is a Blackboard, and no schoolroom is properly furnished without one, as many members of the class as can find room at it should perform their work there, and the remainder use their slates at the recitation seat. The instructor may give out the same example to all the class. If it is in Notation, by glancing his eye over the board, he can readily perceive who are correct, and then announcing it, those with their slates can see, each one for himself, whether he is correct. If the example is in Numeration, the teacher should give it out to the class in such a manner, that they will not ascertain the manner of reading it from him. Thus, in giving out the number 302506 to be read, the teacher should say, *three, nought, two, five, nought, six*. Any pupil may then be called on to read it; and should the first not do it correctly, another should be called on, and so on in succession, till it is read properly. By a little management on the part of the teacher, this class exercise may be made almost as interesting to the pupils as their sports on the play ground.

Should the schoolroom be without a Blackboard, the exercises may be carried on, in a manner nearly similar, with the slates.

The pupils should be drilled frequently upon the definitions and rules, so as to be able to repeat them accurately, and at the same time with ease and fluency. Let the pupil, however, always, if possible, be made to understand the rationale of every operation he is required to perform. This being accomplished, he should be taught to express the rule embracing the principle, readily and correctly.

Before closing my remarks on this subject, it is proper to observe that there are two different systems of Numeration, or methods of naming the periods—the French and the English. The first nine orders or places of figures, however, have the same names in both methods. According to the French method, each period consists of three orders, the name of the first period being Units, of the second Thousands, of the third Millions, of the fourth Billions, and so on. In the English method each period consists of six places, the name of the first being Units, of the second Millions, of the third Billions, and so on. The French method is the most simple, and is the one now generally used in all the best works on Arithmetic. It is obvious that the same general method of instruction would apply, whichever system is used.

Self-Education.

And this leads me, gentlemen, to another remark, to which I invite your attention. It is this: *the Education, moral and intellectual, of every individual, must be, chiefly, his own work*. There is a prevailing and a fatal mistake on this subject. It seems to be supposed that if a young man be sent first to a grammar school, and then to college, he must of course become a scholar: and the pupil himself is apt to imagine that he is to be the mere passive recipient of instruction, as he is of the light and atmosphere which surround him. But this dream of indolence must be dissipated, and you must be awakened to the important truth that, if you aspire to excellence, you must become active and vigorous co-operators with your teachers, and work out your own distinction with an ardor that cannot be quenched, a perseverance that considers nothing done while anything yet remains to be done. Rely upon it, that the ancients were right—*Quisque sua fortuna faber*—both in morals and intellect, we give their final shape to our own characters, and thus become, emphatically, the architects of our own fortunes. How else should it happen, gentlemen, that young men, who have had precisely the same opportunities, should be continually presenting us with such different

results, and rushing to such opposite destinies?—Difference of talent will not solve it, because that difference is very often in favor of the disappointed candidate. You shall see issuing from the walls of the same school—nay, sometimes from the bosom of the same family—two young men, of whom the one shall be admitted to be a genius of high order, the other, scarcely above the point of mediocrity: yet, you shall see the genius sinking and perishing in poverty, obscurity and wretchedness: while on the other hand, you shall observe the *mediocre* plodding his slow but sure way up the hill of life, gaining steadfast footing at every step, and mounting at length to eminence and distinction, an ornament to his family, a blessing to his country. Now, whose work is this? Manifestly their own. *They* are the architects of their respective fortunes. The best seminary of learning that can open its portals to you, can do no more than to afford you the opportunity of instruction: but it must depend at last on yourselves, whether you will be instructed or not, or to what point you will push your instruction. And of this be assured—I speak from observation, a *certain truth*: *There is no excellence without great labor*. It is the *fiat* of Fate from which no power of genius can absolve you. Genius, unexerted, is like the poor moth that flutters around a candle till it scorches itself to death. If genius be desirable at all, it is only of that great and magnanimous kind, which, like the condor of South America, pitches from the summit of Chimborazo above the clouds, and sustains itself at pleasure, in that empyreal region, with an energy rather invigorated than weakened by the effort. It is this capacity for high and long continued exertion—this vigorous power of profound and searching investigation—this careering and wide-sweeping comprehension of mind—and those long reaches of thought, that

Pluck bright honor from the pale faced moon
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom line could never touch the ground,
And drag up drowned honor by the locks.

This is the prowess and these the hardy achievements which are to enrol your names among the great men of the earth.

But how are you to gain the nerve and the courage for enterprises of this pith and moment? I will tell you: As Milo gained that *hoc signo vinces*: for this *must be your work*, not that of *your teachers*. Be you not wanting to yourselves, and you will accomplish all that your parents, friends and country have a right to expect.—*Wirt*.

READING furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours.

Respect due to Parents.

"Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous, when apparent in a child,
Than ever in a monster."

Not only are the young apt to forget the respect due to parents, but often times those who have reared them from infancy; and their waywardness causing their parents to shed tears, when it should be their duty to give them reason for smiles. No sight is there that is so revolting to an upright man, as to see youth disrespecting gray hairs; but when we find a man, arrived at the age of discretion, neglecting his silver-haired parents, and treating them with contempt, no word is forcible enough to express the feeling which naturally arises in every honest breast. The very idea that the babe, whose care has caused them so many sleepless nights, and so much care, should in later years prove a curse instead of a blessing, and repay its parents for all their love by unthankfulness, makes one almost wish that the parents' malediction might be upon him. Yet how often do we see cases in which the child forgets the respect due to his mother, and is regardless of his father's wishes. Children, learn in early age to respect your parents and obey them in all things—struggle not against their authority, but by yielding while young, you will derive honor when older, and never forget that commandment which says:—"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

The Dying Mozart.

History informs us that Wolfgang Mozart, the great German composer, died at Vienna in 1691. There is something strikingly beautiful and touching in the circumstances of his death. His sweetest song was the last he sung, the "Requiem." He had been employed on this exquisite piece for several weeks, his soul filled with inspiration of richest melody, and already claiming kindred with immortality. After giving it its last touch, and breathing into it that undying spirit of song which was to consecrate it through all time as his cynean strain, he fell into a gentle and quiet slumber. At length the light footsteps of his daughter Emilie awoke him. "Come hither, Emilie," said he, "my task is done; the Requiem—my Requiem—is finished."

"Say not so, dear father," said the gentle girl, interrupting him, as tears stood in her eyes. "You must be better—you look better, for even now your cheek has a glow upon it. I am sure we will nurse you well again. Let me bring you something refreshing."

"Do not deceive yourself, my love," said the dying father; "this wasted form can never be restored by human aid. From Heaven's mercy alone do I look for aid in this my dying hour. You spoke of refreshment, my Emilie; take these my last notes; sit down to my piano here—sing with them the hymn of your sainted mother; let me

once more hear those tones which have been my solace and delight."

Emilie obeyed, and with tenderest emotion sang the following stanzas:

Spirit! thy labor is o'er,
Thy term of probation is run,
Thy steps are now bound for the untrodden shore,
And the race of immortals begun.

Spirit! look not on the strife
Or the pleasures of earth with regret;
Pause not on the threshold of limitless life,
To mourn for the day that is set.

Spirit! no fetters can bind,
No wicked have power to molest;
There the weary like thee, the wretched, shall find
A heaven, a mansion of rest.

Spirit! how bright is the road
For which thou art now on the wing!
Thy home it will be with thy Saviour and God,
Their loud hallelujah to sing.

As she concluded, says an account before us, she dwelt for a moment upon the low, melancholy notes of the piece, and then, turning from the instrument, looked in silence for the approving smile of her father. It was the still, passionless smile which the rapt and joyful spirit had left, with the seal of death upon those features.

How to Talk.

The next afternoon, there were some signs of impatience in Mr. Cummings' school. The boys could hardly wait for three o'clock, so eager were they to engage in the new exercise. The teacher thought if that was to be the way every day, he must abandon his purpose. But he thought again that when the novelty of the thing was gone, the boys would not feel so disproportionate an interest in the proposed exercise, and would attend quietly to their other studies, until the proper time for this.

The clock struck three. READY, said master Cummings. Let each one give perfect attention to what is said, and remember the corrections. I shall repeat some sentences and expressions which I have heard you use since yesterday morning; and any of you who can, may suggest the corrections needed. One of you said at recess yesterday, "What grand good times we shall have in that are new lesson." Who perceives the error?

A dozen voices replied, *that are* is not a proper expression. What should it be? *That* is enough. Very well. Are there any other errors? After a while one said, "He should leave out the word *good* after *grand*." Why? said Mr. Cummings. It does not sound right to say *grand good*. Is it correct to say, *grand times*? inquired the teacher. Yes sir. No sir. Why? No one could tell why it was, or was not proper; and all were quite undecided, until Mr. Cummings told them that *grand* was a proper word to be used in some connections, but not to describe an occasion, or season of any kind. Thus we may speak with propriety of a *grand* object, as a river or mountain, but not a *grand time*.

Mr. Cummings continued. I heard this expression last evening, as we were leaving the school-house: "Stop a minute, William, let me jist shet the blinds fust." All looked to Edward Hayes, the boy that had the care of the house, each being glad that it was not he. But no one ventured a correction till Mr. Cummings pronounced the sentence again, just as he heard it from Edward. They soon had it all rightly pronounced—*just* instead of *jist*—*shut* for *shet*—and *first* instead of *fust*.

I will give you but one more sentence to correct at this time, said Mr. Cummings. "Here, Jim, let me fix that swing; you havn't got no gump-tion about you." Here was a general laugh.—Bad expressions often sound much worse when repeated after us, than when we use them ourselves. And the teacher hoped to make them appear to the boys as bad as they did to him. "What errors in this sentence?" *Jim, gump-tion, havn't*—shouted a score of boys.

One thing at a time, said Mr. Cummings. Why is *Jim* improper. It is a nickname, sir. We should not use such names. Is *fix* a proper word to use before *swing*? No one answered. They thought from the question that it was probably wrong, but no one could tell why. What needed to be done to the swing? inquired Mr. Cummings. It was all twisted up and tied in knots, said James Bray. You meant by *fixing* it, then, to untie the knots, did you? Yes sir. Now boys look in your dictionaries and see if the word *fix* has any definition that would apply to such an operation. Robert Ingraham found the word first and read aloud. *Fix, to make firm—to establish—to fasten, &c.* They perceived that none of these definitions would apply. Now, said Mr. Cummings, if you will notice, you will find that a great many persons use the words *fix* and *fixed* very improperly and very frequently. Always be careful that you use the word correctly, or not at all.

What next? *Havn't*—is that proper? No sir, was the ready reply. Well, said Mr. Cummings, such abbreviations are perhaps allowable in common conversation, but not in dignified discourse. How is it with *got*? haven't *got*? No answer was made. This will depend upon circumstances, said the teacher. The word *got* is a very proper one to be used sometimes; but as boys generally use it with the word *have*, it is unnecessary and improper. For instance, when Samuel said, "I have got no pencil," he should have omitted the word *got*, and said, "I have no pencil." Another error in the sentence is the use of *no* after *not*. It should be, *you have no*, or, *you have not any*. But what shall we do with *gump-tion*. "Leave it out." "Throw it away."—Why? Because it is not a good word. Why not? Mr. Cummings had to explain again, that all words like this were called vulgarisms, and not being used by good speakers and writers,

should be abandoned by all. What then shall we use instead of it? Capacity, skill, ingenuity, or some similar word, would express the idea. Now let the whole sentence be repeated, with the connections. Henry Barnes had it all finely arranged, and read as follows: "James, let me assist you in clearing your swing: you do not understand it." Very well, Henry, replied Mr. Cummings; but I perceive you have made the sentence better in another respect. It is kinder in its spirit, and less irritating than the other.

You will now understand the nature of our exercise. We wish to make corrections in pronunciation, and in the wrong use of words; and to abandon altogether the use of vulgarisms—as well as to improve the spirit of our remarks, when they have been censorious or unkind. You will need to consult your dictionaries as well as your friends at home, and get all the assistance you can from every source. Who will try to become correct speakers? All answered *I will*, and went to their recess in fine spirits.—*Youth's Companion*.

Physical Education—Food for Children.

The qualms and raptures of your blood
Rise in proportion to your food—
And, if you would improve your thought,
You must be fed as well as taught.—*Prior*.

There is much good sense in the following extract from a sketch, by "Fanny Butler:"—

As surely as you meet an American woman traveling with a child, there is a basket or a bundle in their society well filled with greasy cakes, sugarplums, apples, peppermint drops, &c. The little wayfarer generally makes his appearance with both fists furnished, and a mouthful of such matter, and as soon as this is despatched begins clamoring for more. Between each supply the child, of course, becomes more uneasy, the torments of a sick stomach being added to the irksome confinement of a coach or cabin, and by the end of the day screams of distress and ill-temper, engendered by nausea, flatulency, and every species of evil naturally resulting from such a day's diet, proclaim the mistake of the half distracted mother, whose line of conduct was dictated by the laudable desire of keeping her child quiet.

I once took the liberty of asking a young woman who was traveling in the same car with me, and stuffing her child incessantly with heavy cakes, which she also attempted to make mine eat, her reasons for this system,—she replied, it was to keep her baby good. I looked at her own sallow cheeks and rickety teeth, and could not forbear suggesting to her how much she was injuring her poor child's health. She stared in astonishment, and pursued the process, no doubt wondering what I meant and how I could be so cruel not to allow pound cake to my child. Indeed, as it may be easily supposed, it becomes a matter of no little difficulty to enforce my own rigid discipline in the midst of the various offers of dainties which tempt my poor little girl at every turn; but I persevere, nevertheless, and am not seldom rewarded by the

admiration which her appearance of health and strength excites wherever she goes.

I remember being excessively amused at the woful condition of an unfortunate gentleman on board of one of the Philadelphia boats, whose sickly looking wife, exhausted with her vain attempts to quiet three sickly looking children, had in despair given them into his charge. The miserable man furnished each of them with a lump of cake, and during the temporary lull caused by this diversion took occasion to make acquaintance with my child, to whom he tendered the same indulgence. Upon my refusing it for her, he exclaimed in astonishment—

"Why, madam, don't you allow the little girl cake?"

"No sir."

"What does she eat, pray?" as if people lived on cake generally.

"Bread and milk, and bread and meat."

"What! no butter? no tea or coffee?"

"None whatever."

"Ah!" sighed the man, as the chorus of woe arose again from his own progeny, the cake having disappeared down their throats, "I suppose that's why she looks so healthy."

I supposed so too, but did not inquire whether the gentleman extended his inference.

A Pleasant Incident.

A very pleasant incident occurred in one of our public schools, a day or two since. It seems that one of the boys attending the school, of the average age of seven years, had, in their play of bat and ball, broken one of the neighbor's windows; but no clue to the offender could be obtained, as he would not confess, nor would any of his associates expose him.

The case troubled the teacher, and on the occasion of one of our citizens visiting the school, she privately and briefly stated the circumstance, and wished him to advert to the principle involved in the case.

The address to the school had reference principally to the conduct of boys in the streets and at their sports. The principles of rectitude and kindness which should govern them every where—even when alone and when they thought there was no eye to see, and there was no one present to observe. The school seemed deeply interested in the remarks.

A very short time after the visitor left the school, a little boy arose from his seat and said—

"Miss L——, I batted the ball that broke Mr. —'s window. Another boy threw the ball, but I batted it and it struck the window. I am willing to pay for it."

There was a death-like silence in the school as the little boy was speaking, and continued for a minute after he had closed.

"But it won't be right for — to pay the whole for the glass," said another boy, rising from his seat; "all of us that were playing should pay

something, because we were all alike engaged in the play. I'll pay my part!"

"And I."

"And I."

A thrill of pleasure seemed to run through the school at this display of correct feeling. The teacher's heart was touched, and she felt more than ever the responsibility of her charge.

Bangor Whig.

Scientific Discovery.

An eminent English professor and chemist, Mr. Grove, has just observed a fact, as interesting in a chemical point of view as worthy of interest from its practical application. It is known that water is composed of two gases—oxygen and hydrogen—combined in the proportion of one volume of the first to two volumes of the second. It is also known that the most intense heat is obtained from burning hydrogen with pure oxygen, and that if those engaged in the physical sciences do not make use of it oftener than they do, it is on account of the complicated and expensive nature of the processes required to produce these gases. Thanks to Mr. Grove, we may hereafter, without any other apparatus than a small tube of platina, which will never wear out, for it is perfectly unalterable, and without any other material than distilled water, procure indefinitely a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen, in the proportions in which they are found in water. Heat a platina tube with a simple spirit lamp, cause a current of steam to pass through it, this will be decomposed and transformed integrally into its gaseous elements, which being conducted into a narrow tube, may be ignited as they escape from it,

It is to be well understood that if the tube is not sufficiently contracted at its extremity, explosion will take place. Mr. Grove recommends the use of such water only as has been deprived of salt by distillation, and of air by previous ebullition. If it be desired to obtain, instead of a continuous current of oxygen and hydrogen, a given quantity of these bodies, it is then only necessary, according to Mr. G., to introduce under a bell (receiver) full of distilled water, carried to the temperature of 93 degrees, (centigrade,) a platina wire terminating in a button, and intensely heated. On the very instant the water becomes decomposed, and the gases occupy the receiver; osmium and irridium appear to act like platina. Is it the same with gold?

Courier des Etats Unis.

EMPHASISING WORDS.—There is a good story on the subject of emphasis. "Boy," said a visiter at the house of his friend, to his little son, "step over the way and see how old Mrs. Brown is." The boy did his errand, and on his return reported that she did not know how old she was; and that he might find out by his own learning.

Let him who regrets a loss of time make a proper use of the future.

THE SCHOOL FRIEND.

CINCINNATI, JULY 1, 1847.

We have been disappointed this month in not receiving an article from our valued correspondent P. We expect his contributions, however, regularly hereafter.

Mr. H. B. L., of Missouri, will find a general reply to his letter, under the article entitled "Mathematical Questions," in our last number. The particular question he proposes cannot be solved by Arithmetic. It may, however, be solved generally by Algebra, and then a specific rule derived from the solution that will solve all similar questions. Should Mr. L. desire to see such a rule, if he will write again it will be cheerfully furnished. We suppose, however, from his letter, that he is fully competent to the task himself.

An article on "Normal Schools," from a correspondent to whom we have heretofore been under obligations, and one on "Common Schools in Illinois," will appear in our next. We have several other communications on hand, that will be attended to in due season.

Question 3d, No. 9, was correctly answered by Samuel Starbuck, of Ia. The solution was received too late for insertion. It was the same, however, in principle as the one published.

Solutions of the Arithmetical Questions in the School Friend, No. 9.

Question 1st. The reciprocal of a number being unity divided by that number, if we take the reciprocals of the numbers 2, $2\frac{1}{2}$, and $3\frac{1}{2}$, we shall find them to be respectively $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{2}{3}$, and $\frac{2}{5}$. Then, as the sum of these fractions, — is to each one respectively, — so is the whole sum, 657 dollars, to each man's share of the contribution. It will thus be found that the first contributed 289,80 dollars; the second 201,60 dollars; and the third 165,60 dollars.

Question 2d. By an oversight, one line of this question was omitted in the last number; it is again proposed in the present number.

Question 3d. If A, B and C pave a street in 18 days, they will do $\frac{1}{18}$ part in one day; in the same manner, B, C and D will do $\frac{1}{9}$; C, D and A, $\frac{1}{6}$; and D, A and B, $\frac{1}{3}$. If these fractions be added together, the sum $\frac{10}{18}$ is the part done by all, working three days each; since in each of the three parts, $\frac{1}{18}$, $\frac{1}{9}$ and $\frac{1}{6}$, there is one day's work of A; in each of the three parts, $\frac{1}{18}$, $\frac{1}{9}$ and $\frac{1}{6}$, one day's work of B, and so on. Dividing the sum by 3, the quotient is $\frac{10}{54}$ which is the part done by all four in one day. Now, if from the part done by all four in one day, we take the part done by B, C and D in one day, the remainder, $\frac{1}{54}$, will be the part done by A in one day. Hence it is easily found that A can do it in 54 days; in a similar manner it will be found that B can do it in 54 days; C, in 41 $\frac{1}{2}$ days; and D, in 170 $\frac{1}{2}$ days.

Arithmetical Questions.—No. 10.

1. At what time does the sun set, when the length of the day (from sunrise to sunset) is four times the length of the morning or evening twilight—the length of the twilight being two sevenths of the time between its close in the evening and its commencement in the morning?

2. Two men, A and B, are on a straight road, on the opposite sides of a gate, and distant from it 308 yards and 277 yards respectively, and travel each towards the original station of the other. How far from the gate will each one be when they arrive at the same distance from it, B travelling 2 yards and A $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards per second?

3. What is the product of $\frac{4}{5}$ in the duodecimal scale, and $\frac{1}{5}$ in the octary scale, the result being expressed in the common scale?

For the School Friend.

The Poor Teacher.

The Christian minister is generally respected by the world. The physician claims and receives its suffrages too. Even the lawyer, though given occasionally to artifice, has a large share of the public sympathy in his behalf. But the poor schoolmaster, it seems, at least in some places, gets nothing but indifference and neglect.

Now there is a cause for this contempt of the teacher's profession, wherever it prevails, and the one which I should mention as paramount is this: the utter unfitness of many who enter the profession. Some cannot see the difference between discipline and severity, and appear to think that their pupils are like so many brutes, to be governed and guided only by the lash and the rod. This is a grievous mistake. Boys are not syllabubs, to be raised by flogging. Beat dough, if you desire to lighten it; beat boys, if you wish to make them heavy. Whips will do for stage-drivers, and cudgels for ox-drivers; but they are miserable things in the hands of teachers. Better be kind than kick; better have patience than brutality; love than wrath. One drop of molasses will catch more flies than a ship-load of vinegar. So says the adage. Do you doubt it? Make the experiment.

E. H.

Clermont county, Ohio.

For the School Friend.

Teaching a Profession.

MR. EDITOR—I have for some time been reading "The School Friend," (which I deem to be a benevolent enterprise, and one which has done, is doing, and, if continued, is destined to effect much in behalf of education—the common cause of our common country,) and I have frequently thought of writing a word on a subject that is too generally overlooked: I mean, the condition of common schools, together with the means of their improvement.

I am aware, sir, that the low condition of our schools is often commented upon, and that it is such a common thing for us to get into wrangling

disputes with our teachers, and "turn them off," that we are indeed quite surprised when we happen to employ a teacher who happens to give some kind of general satisfaction for six months or one year. But here is what is so generally overlooked. Perhaps nine tenths of our community have never once thought of improving this wretched state of things, except by "turning off" the present incumbent, and employing, out of the number of "illiterate" that apply, the "cheapest man" that presents himself. It is in consequence of this, that those who have taken the pains and have been at the expense to qualify themselves, and who, as teachers, would be useful and ornaments to their country, are driven out of the business.

It is a lamentable fact, in this western country, upon which nature seems to have lavished so unsparingly her charms which invite immigration from all lands and nations, that the standard of education is not sufficiently elevated, and teaching sufficiently permanent, to induce young men to qualify and devote themselves to that special work.

That the western country, in general, is without permanent teachers, is too well known to need telling, and that the progress of education is thereby greatly retarded, is equally well known: in fact, the latter is inseparably connected with the former. It certainly, therefore, behooves the friends of this good cause to devise the means by which teaching may be made more permanent, and soon classed among "the professions." And yet, while I advocate this doctrine, I know, in the mean time, that it is impracticable. But is this a reason why we should drop it, if the plan be a good one? What is impracticable in the *mean-time*, may not always be so, and in the present case I am certain *will* not. We may and ought to adopt it as good policy, and as the country grows older, and becomes more populous, we will no longer have it to say—it is *impracticable*.

The cause of the present state of schools is readily come at. Ransack the western country from end to end, and from border to border, there could scarcely be found a half dozen young men fitting themselves for the noble employment of training the immortal mind! I, for one, never yet have found that young man, who, while pursuing his academic course, would tell you he designed being a teacher. I ask *why it is so?* It needs no extraordinary sagacity to discover why.

Few situations are to be found where fair compensations are to be had, and in consequence the teacher, (to the neglect of his duties,) is from necessity compelled to resort to a half dozen other schemes to procure support,—such as teaching night school, singing school, giving concerts, &c.; and after all is told, it is "hard up and down" between him and poverty, which shall have the ascendancy.

No one need be startled at the above picture; it is true as life of many villages and towns of my

acquaintance. These are the reasons why so few, if any, are preparing themselves to teach.

What is the effect this state of things has on education? Any one who has ever thought upon the subject need scarcely be told, that those who engage in teaching, engage only temporarily, making it a stepping-stone into other professions.

Does this, then, not account for the frequent mismanagement of schools, and dissatisfaction that springs up between teacher and parents? It certainly does—inasmuch as those who now teach, do it not from *choice* but from *necessity*. Some, while contracting to teach, do it with reluctance, and, when they get into the school-room, feel as though they were in the midst of an abomination—they fairly *loathe* their duties! How can it be expected such are to give satisfaction? The teacher must be satisfied *himself*, in order to satisfy. As well, indeed, might we expect an opaque body to emit light, as a teacher who loathes his employment to render satisfaction to his patrons. Do any now not see the mischief that arises out of the fact that teachers are not specifically trained for their important work? This idea, says a distinguished patron of education, should be reiterated till it is seen and felt by every one who has entrusted to him a soul to train, that every reason will hold good for a specific training of teachers for the purpose of giving instruction, which can be found for the specific training of persons for any other profession, or for any other department of business. "So plain, reasonable, common sense a principle is disregarded no where else. What! expect a person to preach or plead efficiently who has taken no pains specifically to fit himself for the pulpit or the bar? What! expect a young man to administer medicine skilfully who has only *been doctored*? Shall a man be employed to assume the responsibilities of training youth, because he can make more money during the winter in this way than by chopping wood? What! have your portrait painted by one who has only practised on barns and fences? or your dress coat cut by a man who never knew how to take a measure?" If you wanted your watch mended would you go to a blacksmith? or a bureau made, would you employ a house carpenter? True enough, they may be done up in some style by almost any one. I knew a man who undertook to make a wagon, to move his family and household effects: his tools were an axe, auger and saw—and he a most miserable bungler, into the bargain. Surprising to say, however, his wagon did answer the purpose of moving him; but how far remains to be seen. It carried him one half mile from home—broke down—and he could not get back. Moreover, to my certain knowledge, up to this time, he never received from his neighbors any orders for wagons.

"I ask, does it not appear that it is too generally thought wagon-making, coach-making and painting are matters of greater importance than the training of the immortal mind!" We require

our workman to serve a long, laborious apprenticeship; but too frequently it is the case that we are willing to employ almost any man who is willing to teach, without any regard to his apprenticeship. It is to be hoped, however, that this state of things will soon be changed—that the standard of education will be elevated—teaching made a profession, and raised on an equality with either of the others; then no longer may you ransack the western country from Dan to Beersheba to find a young man who will have the *nerve* to say, alongside of those who talk of law and medicine, *I am candidate for a teacher*.

The picture will then be reversed—*gloriously* reversed. Our country will then be supplied with teachers, who will teach not from *necessity* but from *choice*. There will then be some sense in the saying—"the schoolmaster is abroad,"—nay, it will be *full of sense*.

The judgment, the will and energies of him who engages in this glorious work, will *all* conspire to make him useful in his calling. Teaching will then become, in reality and respectability, a profession; and those who design to engage in it will be specifically trained for it.

A FRIEND OF EDUCATION.

Princeton, Ia., May 27, 1847.

Common School Convention in Indiana.

We have full reports of the doings of the Common School Convention, which met in this city on last Wednesday, and being unable to give them in full, we place a brief summary before our readers.

It will be recollected that this convention assembled pursuant to a resolution of the last Legislature. A large number of the most devoted friends of education were in attendance. The HON. ISAAC BLACKFORD was appointed President—JOHN TAYLOR, Esq., of Jefferson county, and N. BOLTON, Esq., of Marion county, were appointed Secretaries.

The Convention was opened by prayer. A committee to lay before the convention, by resolutions, the necessary business to be taken up to carry out the objects of the convention, was appointed. The convention then adjourned until two o'clock in the afternoon. The business committee reported the following plan for obtaining an enactment of a law to promote the object for which the convention assembled:—That a committee of three be appointed to draft a law to lay before the Governor and the next Legislature, containing such principles as the convention might direct, which law should give at least three months schooling in each year to all the children of suitable age in the State; the means to be provided by taxation:—that there be a State Superintendent—that a committee of seven be appointed to publish an address to the people—that the law to be enacted by the Legislature be thereafter laid before the people at an election to be held on a day set apart for that purpose, not being a day of either the annual elec-

tions—that the State Superintendent be elected by the people.

Great importance was given to the subject whether this should be a general system to extend to each county, township and school district, or such as might adopt the law. It seemed to be the opinion of the greater portion of the convention, that it should be general—but, as it was an apple of discord in the convention, the friends of the general system were satisfied with the resolve that there be at least three months schooling to all the children of the State, and left the time and manner of the approval of the law by the people, to the Legislature. The committee to compose and lay the law before the Governor and Legislature consists of O. H. Smith, A. Kinney, and C. Fletcher.

State Journal.

For the School Friend.

Permit me, through the columns of the Friend, to allude to the general and increasing interest on the subject of Education pervading this portion of the West. This city has recently made provisions for establishing free schools, which will soon be in active operation. The schools now in operation are generally in a flourishing condition. The County Seminary stands pre-eminent, as a model school. We regret to learn that its late efficient principal, Mr. J. P. Safford, has closed his connection with the institution—having been called to a professorship in Kentucky. The interesting exercises at the closing exhibition of this school were enhanced by the presentation of a gold pencil by the pupils to their teacher, with many tokens of regret at his departure.

The annual exhibition of the Female Institute took place on the 21st inst. The known abilities of the Principal, and the high character of similar exercises on former occasions, secured a full audience,—and, whether they listened to "Imagination's flights," "Mental energies," "The funeral knell of prejudice," "The triumphant Excelsior," or the

— "Harp tuned for heavenly breeze,
Ungently swept by earth's rude blast"—

All were equally gratified, and left with sincere wishes for the continued prosperity and usefulness of this institution.

I send you a *stolen crumb* of this feast, a parting song, written for the occasion by one of the graduates.

Indianapolis, May 22.

A Parting Song.

Written by one of the Graduates of the Indianapolis Institute, May, 1847.

We shall go forth together,
From scenes to memory dear,—
Familiar haunts where centre
The joys of many a year;
From the beauty and the truth
Of the heart's free early love;
From the generous trust of youth,
O'er a cold world to rove.

We shall go forth together,
In bright sunshine and flowers,
While summer songsters wander
Thro' green and leafy bowers;
All bid a joyous welcome,
And fair our pathway gleams.
Will life be ever lovely—
And *truthful* as it seems?

We shall go forth together—
And when the dark hours come,
When chilling winds of winter
Through the lone forest roam,—
When hearts we fondly trusted
Shall coldly turn away—
May Hope's bright star still guide us
To an unclouded day.

We shall go forth together—
Yet a *divided* band.

One is not here—a sister
Hath sought a brighter land.
Yes—in our happy circle
Has death an entrance found;
In the slumber of the tomb
Our fairest flowers are bound.

We shall go forth together,—
One farewell song of love
To those, who in the paths of Truth
Have taught our steps to rove.
Sisters, farewell!—life's future hours
May prove a troubled dream—
Oh may its morning sun arise
By the living water's stream.

The Welland Canal.

Every instructor should endeavor to avoid falling behind the times in his geographical knowledge. We saw a teacher not long since, who, on being asked, what was the political condition of Algiers, gave an answer to the question, that indicated he was ignorant of the conquest of the city and surrounding country, and its occupancy by the French. As there may be some instructors who do not know where the Welland Canal is situated, we would state that it is in Canada West; connects lakes Erie and Ontario, and is large enough to admit the passage of vessels of 125 tons burthen. Ships from either of the four upper great lakes may now pass through this canal, and thence by lake Ontario and the river St. Lawrence to the Atlantic Ocean. Pupils studying geography, should be rendered familiar with the great routes of travel and commerce. It is of much more utility to teach these than the location of unimportant towns and cities.

New Era in Navigation.—The Buffalo Commercial says that a few days ago the three masted schooner, New Brunswick, loaded with 18,000 bushels of wheat at Chicago, and cleared for Liverpool. She goes by the way of the Welland canal and the St. Lawrence. This is the first clearance of this kind ever made from the inland waters of the great lakes for an European port, and constitutes a new era in the history of navigation.

Never be idle. If your hands cannot be usefully employed, attend to the cultivation of your mind.

Geographical--Territory of Minnesota.

This new territory is bounded on the north by Canada West; on the east by Michigan and Wisconsin; on the south by the parallel 43 deg. 30 min., which is the most northern line of Iowa; and on the west by the river Sioux and Red River of the North. The line separating the Minnesota from Michigan is in Lake Superior to the Falls of the St. Louis river, and thence south till it strikes the river St. Croix, which it follows to the Mississippi. Thence down the Mississippi to lat. 43½, the place of beginning.

Embraced within these boundaries there are about 90,000 square miles—equal to 58,000,000 of acres. It is in nearly the same latitude as the State of Maine. In area it exceeds the Island of Great Britain, and it is nearly equal to France.—Comparing it with old states, it is as large as New York and Pennsylvania. For the production of wheat and the grasses, its soil and climate are favorable. Now, it appears to the people of the United States as extremely distant and exterior. So did Wisconsin fifteen years ago. In commercial advantages, it will not be one of the most favored of the states, nor yet one of the least. By means of Lake Superior, on which it borders for more than one hundred miles, from Pigeon river to Fond du Lac, its northern and middle portion will have cheap communication with all the lake shores and the Atlantic, and through the Upper Mississippi and St. Peter's rivers will hold easy intercourse with the whole great valley below.

Lake Superior affords abundance of good harbors, and the Mississippi offers fine navigation up to the Falls of St. Anthony, more than one hundred miles above the Southern boundary of Minnesota.

With the exception of its western portion, it is well watered by rivers and lakes. Its lake border is rich in metalliferous deposits.

The most important points in Minnesota at present, and probably for all time to come, are Fond du Lac, at the western extremity of Lake Superior, and Fort Snelling, near the Falls of St. Anthony.

With many, its cold climate will be an objection. It is pretty well north; but if a man wishes to raise a vigorous family, (and we know of nothing more desirable,) he will much sooner seek a home in Minnesota than in Texas.—*Toledo Blade.*

Order--Carefulness.

If we properly considered our true interest, and indeed our own convenience, we should be led to see the importance of the moral influence resulting from *habits of order.*

Even children perceive the beauty and advantages of care and neatness; and almost instinctively acquire the practice, from the example of those with whom they are associated.

Some persons plead they have no turn for such things; and therefore they are excusable for their neglect. But this is a mistake. The real diffi-

culty arises from a feeling of which some are scarcely conscious; and which few are frank enough to acknowledge. Is it not to save ourselves a little trouble? Is it not self-indulgence? To be plain, is it not indolence? And does not the indulgence of this feeling cause more of our troubles and difficulties than many are aware of.

For instance, if we have unnecessarily neglected a duty, or have left an article out of place, which might as well have been returned at the time; if we have done a thing indifferently which ought to have been done well—or if we have failed to accomplish an object for want of due exertion; What is the reason? Let us be honest, and examine it fairly. Is it not that we have given way to the feeling spoken of? And do we not find that this feeling gains strength by indulgence? But how are we to get rid of it? The reply is, we must contend against it, and show it no quarter; and little by little we will gain the mastery. Early life is the best time to eradicate it; but it will yield to proper efforts, at all ages.

You ask how is this to be effected? The answer is, by *learning to love labor.* But to do this you must study to make every kind of business a pleasure. To a great extent this can be done. For by carefully digesting, and then adopting, the most simple and systematic mode of performing every duty, greater precision and success will be attained; and being simplified and made easy, the performance will become a pleasure. For no position is more true than this? *Whatever we feel we do well, we take pleasure in doing;* and is not the converse equally so? Whatever we feel is not well done, affords us no satisfaction. If, therefore, we learn to do everything well, will not the doing of everything then be a pleasure? Does not this correspond with our own experience?

Difficulties will frequently occur, but these must not dishearten us, as nothing valuable can be accomplished without effort; and for our encouragement we should always bear in mind that there is a way of doing everything, and if one method fails, we must try another.

The principles of order and neatness are so simple and so plain, that it needs but moderate attention to understand them; and but reasonable effort to put them in practice: but that effort must be continued and persevered in, until we succeed. For step by step we shall gain on our deficiencies; and the consciousness of some progress will encourage further exertion. We should never forget that to become fitted to train others, it is especially needful we should first discipline ourselves.—*Farmer's Cabinet.*

Poissoneuse.

The incorrect translation of a word, producing sickness

Not long after the general peace, when all classes of English travellers, learned and unlearned, polished and unpolished, flocked to the Continent in search of the classical and the picturesque, one of these pilgrims met a companion sitting in

a state of most woful despair, and apparently near the last agonies, by the side of one of the mountain lakes of Switzerland. With great anxiety he inquired the cause of his suffering. "Oh?" said the latter, "I was very hot and thirsty, and took a large draught of the clear water of the lake, and then sat down on this stone to consult my guide book. To my astonishment I found there that the water of this lake is very *poisonous*. O, I am a gone man—I drank so much there is no hope for me! I feel it running all over me; I have only a few minutes to live! Remember me to ——" "Let me see the guide book," said his friend. Turning to the passage, he found "L'eau du lac est bien *poisseuse*"—"the water of the lake abounds in fish." Is that the meaning of it?" "Certainly." "I never was better," said the dying man, leaping up with a countenance radiant as the sun on a fine May morning. Then extending his arm in the true Longbow style, "there's muscle," he cut a series of capers over the grass that would have done honor to a Vestris. "What would have become of you," said his friend, "if I had not met you?" "I should have died of imperfect knowledge of the French language."—*New Haven Herald*.

For the School Friend.

Reply to T. H. Herdman's Philosophical query.

Before answering this Query I would make a remark on the *if* in the first part, "if the tides &c." It is just as well established in the mind of every philosopher that the tides are caused by the attraction of the Sun and Moon as that an eclipse of the Sun is caused by the interposition of the Moon between that body and the earth.

Though it is well ascertained that the tides are caused by the attraction of the Sun and Moon, yet, when all the circumstances are considered, the problem of the tides is one of the most difficult in Physical Astronomy. It is so regarded in the great work of Laplace on Celestial Mechanics, who designates it as "*la plus epineuse de l'Astronomie Physique*," the most difficult problem of Physical Astronomy.

According to Ferguson, the cause of the tides was discovered by Kepler, who, in his *Introduction to the Physics of the Heavens*, thus explains it: "The orb of the attracting power, which is in the Moon, is extended as far as the Earth; and draws the waters under the torrid zone, acting upon places where it is vertical, insensibly on confined seas and bays, but sensibly on the ocean, whose beds are large and the waters have the liberty of reciprocation, that is, of rising and falling." This hint was improved by Newton, who wrote so amply on the subject, applying the resources of his powerful mind to the mathematical investigation of its laws, that he is generally regarded as the discoverer of the true theory, though he only explained the most obvious results of observation. The subject was afterwards discussed by Bernouille, Euler, and Maclaurin, and these three celebrated mathematicians participated in the prize

awarded by the French Academy in 1740. Laplace afterwards investigated the subject and obtained the formulæ from which the height of the tides at different places is now calculated, although even his investigations were far from completely solving the problem.

About the year 1831, the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg proposed the problem of the tides as a prize question, but I have not seen any notice of any solutions having been presented.—The subject is also undergoing investigation both in England and France, and the governments of these countries have contributed funds towards defraying the necessary expenses of taking observations.

The answer to the particular query in the School Friend is a very simple matter, and has been known to almost every person who paid any attention to the general theory of the tides, since the days of Newton. By the attraction of the Sun and Moon the surface of the ocean is elevated into what is termed a great *tide wave*, which moves in a general direction from the east towards the west; though, on account of the configuration of the various coasts, its direction in some places differs from this considerably. When this tide wave meets with channels or rivers, the water is accumulated by the opposition of the contracting banks, until it rises much higher there than the elevation of the tide wave above the general surface of the ocean. It is somewhat analogous to a gentle breeze which may be felt but little in an open plain, but becomes strong and brisk in a narrow street, or in a long valley whose wider end opens towards the approach of the wind. According to Professor Whewel, there are two great tide waves in the Atlantic ocean: one being termed the North Atlantic, the other the South Atlantic tide wave. These tide waves meet the coast of America in an oblique direction; the one rolling up from the south and the other down from the north; they meet in the vicinity of the Bay of Fundy, and thus cause the extraordinary high tides at that place.

Punctuation.

MR. EDITOR:—Permit me to call the attention of your readers, and especially of *teachers*, to the importance of *punctuation* in written communications. This subject has been too much neglected. There are many persons among those who consider themselves well educated, and even among *teachers*, who, in their written correspondence, make use of almost every variety of construction in our language, without the use of a single punctuation mark. Should those very individuals discover a printed article destitute of punctuation, they would condemn it at once, as unintelligible; and yet they suppose *their* scribbling, often wretchedly bad, can be understood with perfect ease, and without even the *possibility* of misapprehension.

Such a state of things ought not to exist. Our language is made up of parts having certain rela-

tions to each other; and it is necessary that those relations should be understood in order to make the language intelligible.

The importance of this subject, perhaps, may be better illustrated by a few examples; take the following: "There were in the coach the following persons: Mr. Murphy Mr. Smith his son a lawyer Mr. Johnson his brother-in-law a minister and two other gentlemen." Now, without any punctuation, the reader would be unable to determine whether there were five, six, seven, eight or nine persons mentioned; and he would be equally undecided with regard to the profession or relationship of the different individuals. Let it be punctuated as follows: "Mr. Murphy, Mr. Smith, his son, a lawyer, Mr. Johnson, his brother-in-law, a minister, and two other gentlemen." Here we have nine persons, the lawyer and minister not being related to any of the others. Again: "Mr. Murphy; Mr. Smith, his son, a lawyer; Mr. Johnson, his brother-in-law, a minister; and two other gentlemen." Here we have five persons, Mr. Smith being a lawyer and son of Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Johnson being his brother-in-law and a minister. Again: "Mr. Murphy; Mr. Smith; his son, a lawyer; Mr. Johnson; his brother-in-law, a minister; and two other gentlemen." Now we have seven, the lawyer being son of Mr. Smith, and the minister brother-in-law to Mr. Johnson. By varying the punctuation, the meaning could be changed several times more.

Again, take the following: "He is an old and experienced *MAN* in vice and *wickedness* he is never *ENGAGED* in opposing the workers of *iniquity* he takes *DELIGHT* when the poor are in *distress* he never *REJOICES* but hopes for better days." If a pause be made at each of the words in small capitals, a very good man is described; if at the words in italics, a very bad man.

"Gen. Taylor says the Picayune has defeated the Mexicans." The above sentence, correct if properly punctuated, without punctuation makes the Picayune defeat the Mexicans.

Examples could be multiplied, showing the importance of this subject, but the above are deemed sufficient.

It is desirable that *teachers* should give their attention to this subject; that they should teach it to their scholars. Let them be taught to punctuate as they write; that it is as important to insert the pauses in their proper places, as the words or letters; they will thus form habits which will enable them, as they grow up, to punctuate as unerringly as they can spell their words.

It may be said that there is no established system of rules for punctuation. It is true, there is not a perfect system, but there are rules enough in nearly all our grammars to enable us to avoid all ambiguity in our writing, and, for the sake of the public generally, and *printers particularly*, these rules should be understood and practised.

District School Journal.

Poetry.

From the Watchman.

A Country Schoolmaster.

Of all professions that this world has known,
 From clowns and cobblers, upwards to the throne;
 From the grave Architect of Greece or Rome,
 Down to the maker of a shilling broom;
 The worse for care and undeserved abuse,
 The first in real dignity and use,
 If skilled to teach, and diligent to rule,
 Is the blam'd master of a little school.
 Not he who guides the legs, or skills the clown
 To square his fists, and knock his fellows down;
 Or he who learns the still more barbarous art,
 To parry thrusts, and pierce the human heart,
 Is half so much despised, as the man
 Who teaches us mysterious nature's plan;
 Yes, that good man, who, faithful to his charge,
 Still toils the opening reason to enlarge;
 Directs the youthful mind through every stage,
 From humble A B C, to God's own page;
 From black, rough pot books, horrid to the sight,
 To fairest lines, floating o'er purest white;
 From numeration through an opening way,
 Till dark annuities seem clear as day:
 Pours o'er the mind, a flood of mental light,
 Expands its wings, and gives it power of flight,
 Till earth's remotest bounds, and heaven's bright
 trains,
 He weighs, he measures, pictures and explains:
 If such his task, sure honor and regard,
 And wealth and fame, should be his dear reward;
 Sure, every tongue should utter forth his praise,
 And blessings gild the evening of his days.

Yes, blest indeed! with cold ungrateful scorn,
 By sturdy, harsh, and daily crosses worn,
 Despised by those, who to his labors owe
 All which they read, and almost all they know;
 The partial parents' taunt, the idler's dull:
 For oft he's subject to the blame of all;
 Old men and women scandalize his name,
 Their children, listening, learn to do the same.
 Plac'd on a point, the object of each sneer,
 His faults enlarge, his merits disappear.
 If mild, our lazy teacher loves his ease,
 The boys at school do any thing they please;
 If rigid, he's a cold unfeeling wretch,
 He drives the children stupid with a birch;
 My child, with gentle means, would mind a breath,
 But frowns and floggings frighten him to death.
 Do as he will, his conduct is defamed,
 And dear, the little that he gets, is gained:
 E'en what is given him on the quarter day,
 They call it money lost or thrown away;
 Says one, it cannot be I've sent so long,
 It cannot be, his bill is surely wrong.
 Just Heaven!

If such their fate by thy divine control,
 O! give them strength and fortitude of soul;
 Souls that disdain the murderous tongue of fame,
 And strength to make the sturdiest of 'em tame.

Liability to Error.

To show the liability of the human intellect to fall into error, Mr. Byrne, Professor of Mathematics, College for Civil Engineers, London, makes the following statement:

"Babbage, in speaking of his Logarithms, says, the proofs of the present tables were read three times—1st, with the marked copy of Callet's lo-

garithms; 2dly, with a copy of Hutton's logarithms, fourth edition, 1804; 3dly, with a copy of Vega's logarithms, folio, compared with the logarithms of Vega; 5thly, they were read with those of the *Trigonometria Artificialis* of Briggs.

"They were next returned to the printer, and stereotyped, and the proofs from the plates were read—6thly, with the logarithms of Vega; 7thly, with the whole of the logarithms of Gardiner; 8thly, with the logarithms of Taylor; and, 9thly, by a different set of readers, they were again read with the logarithms of Taylor. After all this care and investigation, I found an error in Mr. Babbage's works not long since."

Mensuration of Artificers' Work.

It is desirable that every person should understand the method of measuring mason's work—plastering—finding the contents of cisterns, &c. Mr. Warren, long and well known as one of the most accurate measurers of work in this city, says, that the Appendix to Ray's Arithmetic, Part 3rd, contains the clearest, most comprehensive, and practical methods of measurement that he has ever examined, and that for all the usual calculations it is decidedly preferable to any other treatise on Arithmetic or Mensuration with which he is acquainted.

My friend has a great respect for the truth, said a baronet one day to a gentleman.

So I perceive, was the reply, for he always keeps at a most respectful distance from it.

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